

Carvings

BARBARA
HEPWORTH

Drawings

Pamphlet
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BARBARA HEPWORTH

Carvings and Drawings

1937—1954

WALKER ART CENTER

April 15—May 29, 1955

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA ART GALLERIES

June 15—August 15, 1955

SAN FRANCISCO MUSEUM OF ART

September 1—October 16, 1955

THE ALBRIGHT ART GALLERY

November 9—December 15, 1955

THE ART GALLERY OF TORONTO

January 1—February 15, 1956

THE MONTREAL MUSEUM OF FINE ARTS

March 1—March 31, 1956

THE BALTIMORE MUSEUM OF ART

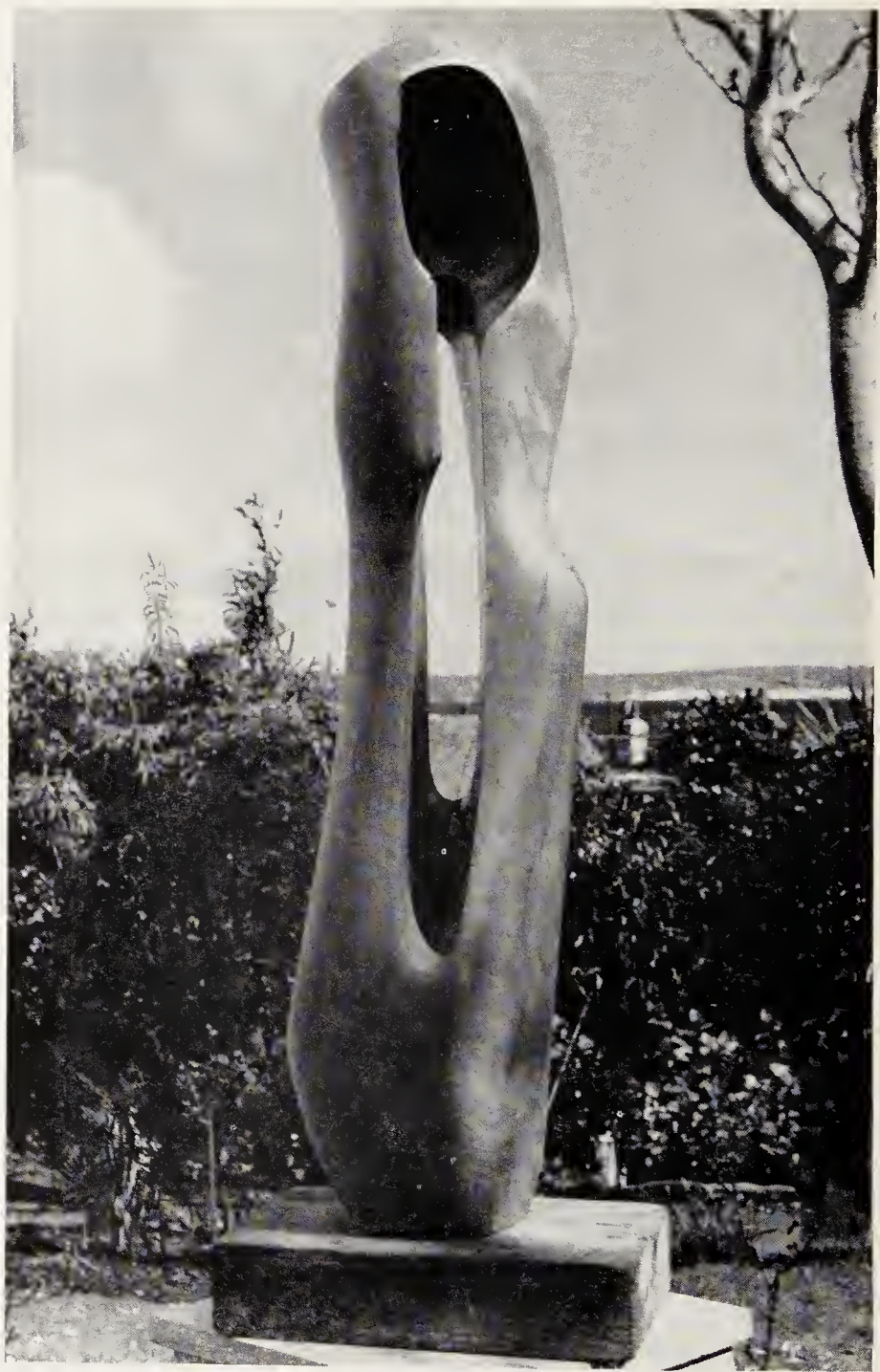
April 15—June 30, 1956

From University Library
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MARTHA JACKSON GALLERY

22 East 66 Street, New York

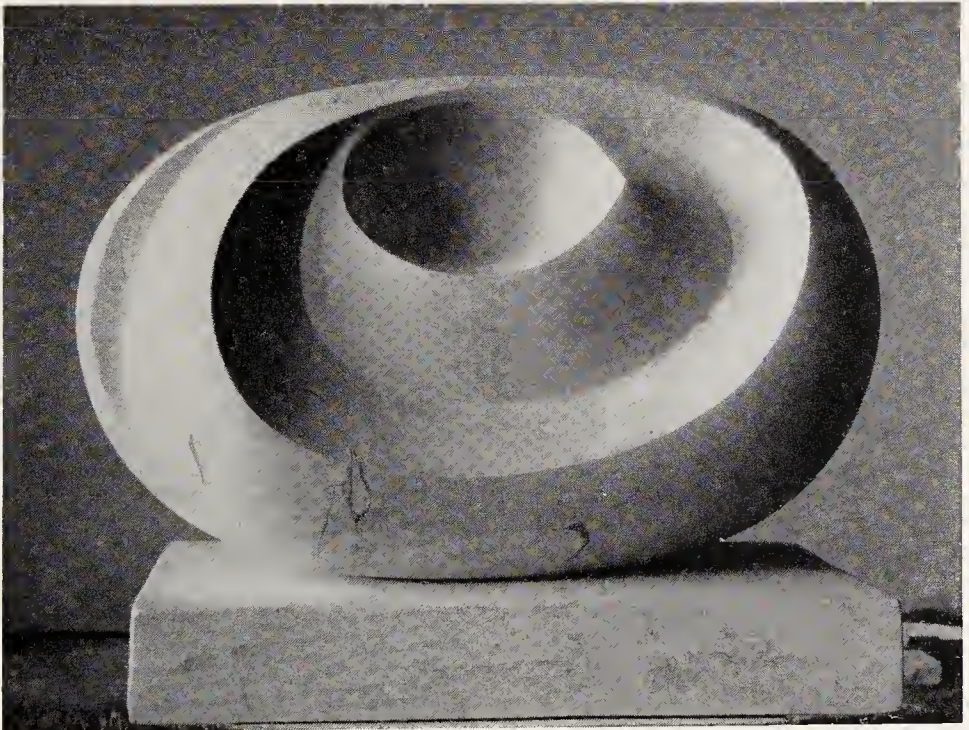


FOREWORD

A new and constructive image which provokes in us a desire to enhance life, assert it, and assist its further development—there we have the definition of the kind of work of art which a sculptor like Barbara Hepworth tries to create. If we live with such a work of art it becomes an object which in contemplation confers on the troubled spirit a timeless serenity.

To infuse the formal perfection of geometry with the vital grace of nature—that might be taken as a description of the ideal which Barbara Hepworth began to desire and achieve. Obviously she sometimes begins with geometrical constructions (generally in the form of preliminary drawings) and modifies these vitalistically in the process of transforming them to a sculptural mass. But equally obviously she sometimes begins from a life-study, and many of her forms suggest, however indirectly, naturalistic prototypes.

There is one human facet which I think should be emphasized, and one tech-





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nical aspect which should not be passed over without comment. I have known Barbara Hepworth throughout most of her active career, and what has been astonishing and of some general significance is the fact that she has remained a completely human person, not sacrificing either her social or her domestic instinct, her feminine graces or sympathies, to some hard notion of a career.

The other factor in Barbara Hepworth's career which seems to me to be of particular significance is her devotion to the technique of carving. The act of carving is not only technically, but one might almost say "mystically," distinct from any other method of creating solid forms in space. Chinese mysticism makes much use of the symbol of the Uncarved Block; it represents the possibilities latent in the universe, to be released by contemplation, by mental "attention." The plastic images latent in that same block can only be released by similar disciplines—there is in art a law of compensation by which the greatest impression of ease is the effect of the highest degree of skill.

In writing about the work of a living artist, one can never end on a note of finality, least of all in the case of an artist who has shown, throughout her career, the unfolding growth of an organism—the outward spiralling from the still centre of an assured personality.

SIR HERBERT READ

NOTES BY THE ARTIST

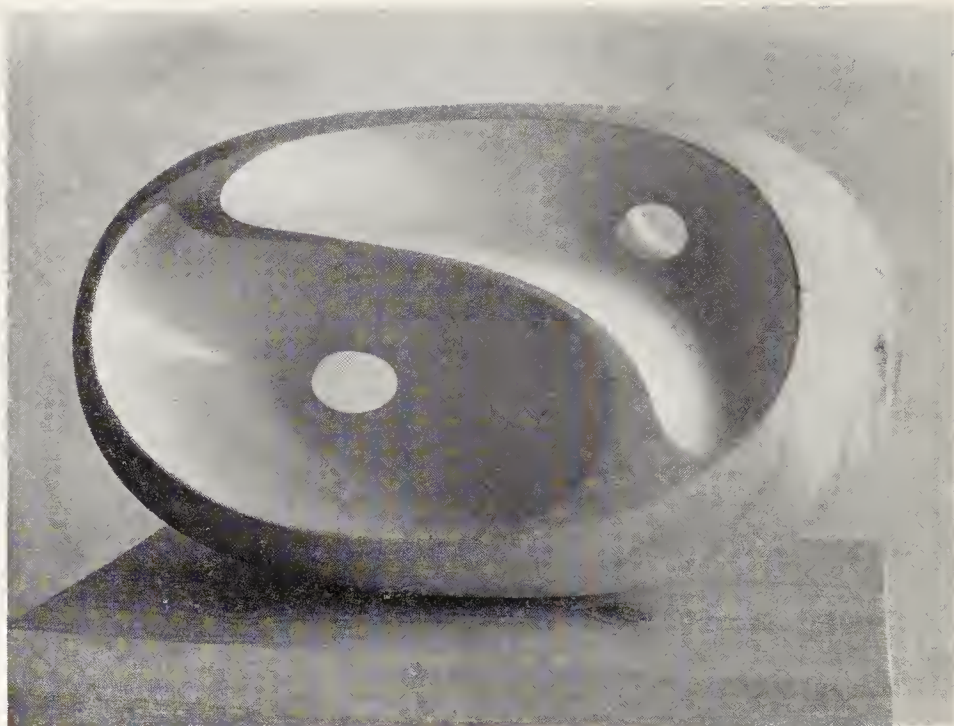
In sculpture there must be a complete realization of the structure and quality of the stone or wood which is being carved. But I do not think that this alone supplies the life and vitality of sculpture. I believe that the understanding of the material and the meaning of the form being carved must be in perfect equilibrium. There are fundamental shapes which speak at all times and periods in the language of sculpture. . . . The forms which have had special meaning for me since childhood have been the standing form (which is the translation of my feeling towards the human being standing in landscape); the two forms (which is the tender relationship of one living thing beside another); and the closed form, such as the oval, spherical or pierced form (sometimes incorporating colour) which translates for me the association and meaning of gesture in landscape; in the repose of say a mother and child, or the feeling of the embrace of living things, either in nature or in the human spirit.



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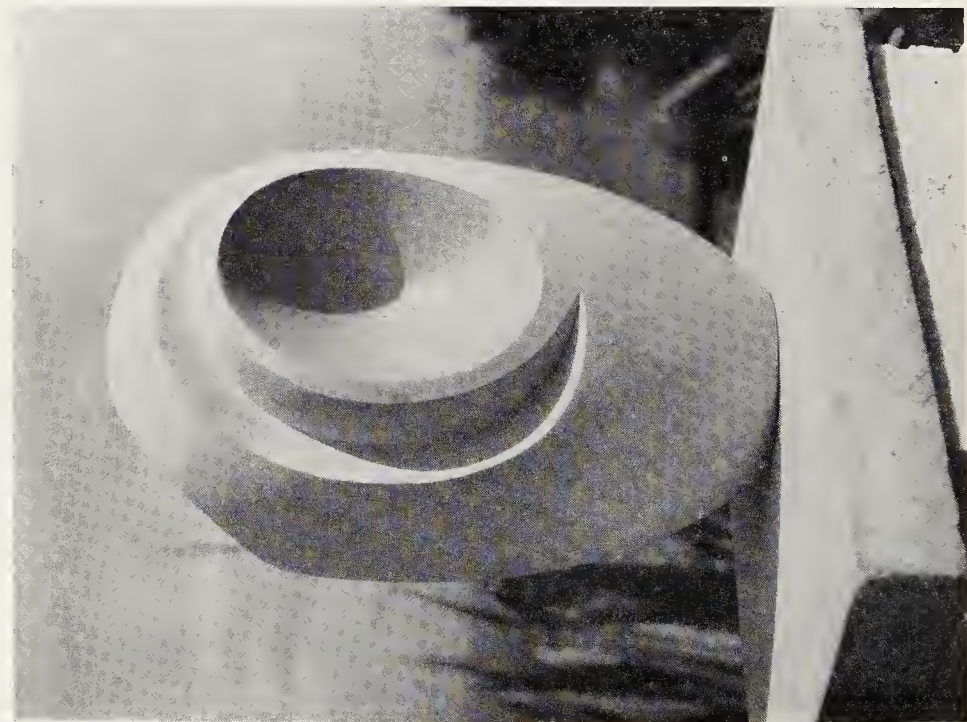
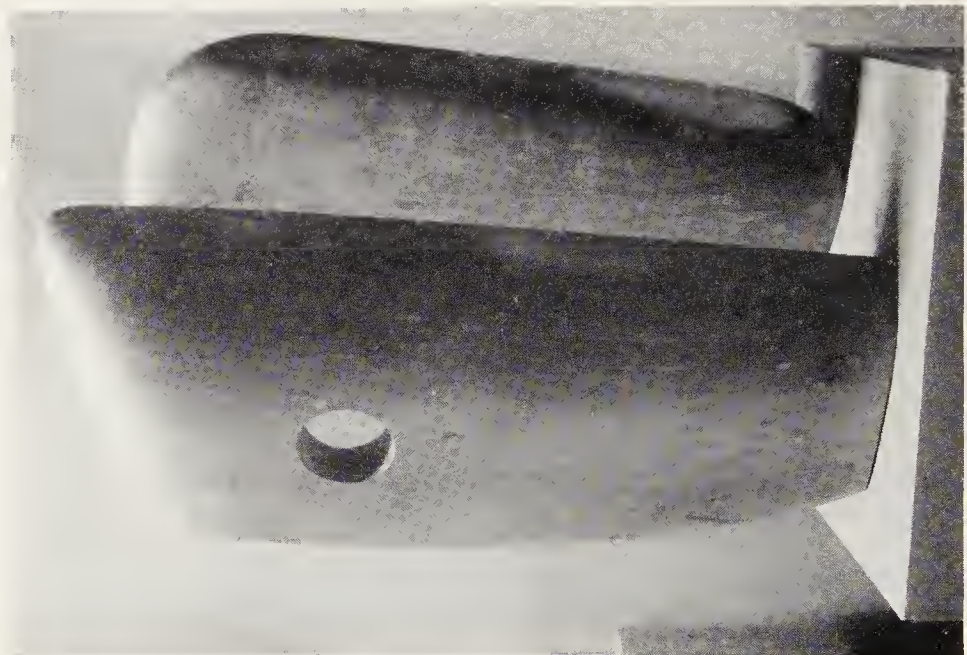


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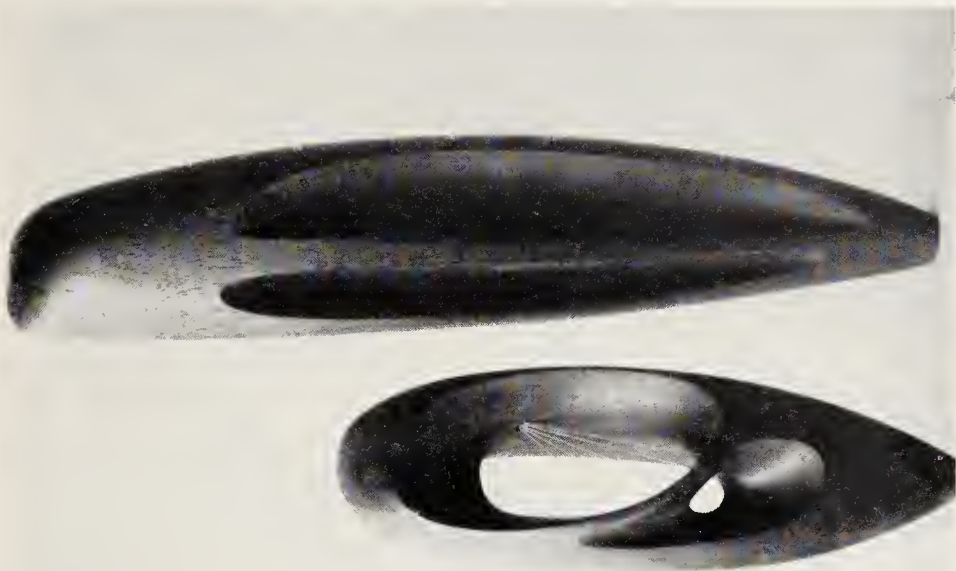
In the contemplation of Nature we are perpetually renewed, our sense of mystery and our imagination is kept alive, and rightly understood, it gives us the power to project into a plastic medium some universal or abstract vision of beauty.

From the sculptor's point of view one can either be the spectator of the object or the object itself. For a few years I became the object. I was the figure in the landscape and every sculpture contained to a greater or lesser degree the everchanging forms and contours embodying my own response to a given position in that landscape. . . . I used colour and strings in many of the carvings of this time. The colour in the concavities plunged me into the depth of water, caves, or shadows deeper than the carved concavities themselves. The strings were the tension I felt between myself and the sea, the wind or the hills.

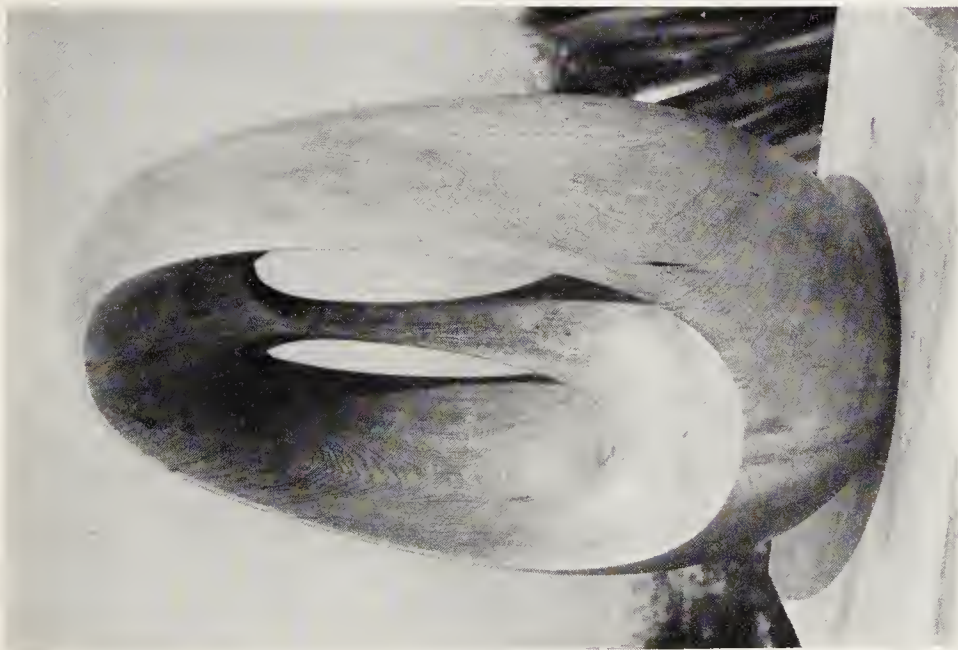




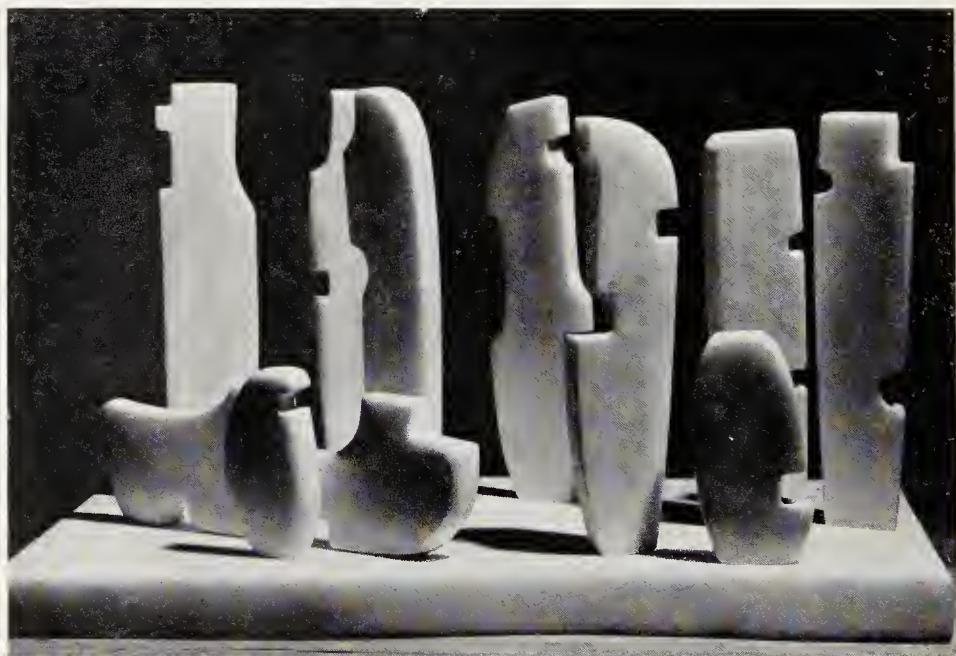
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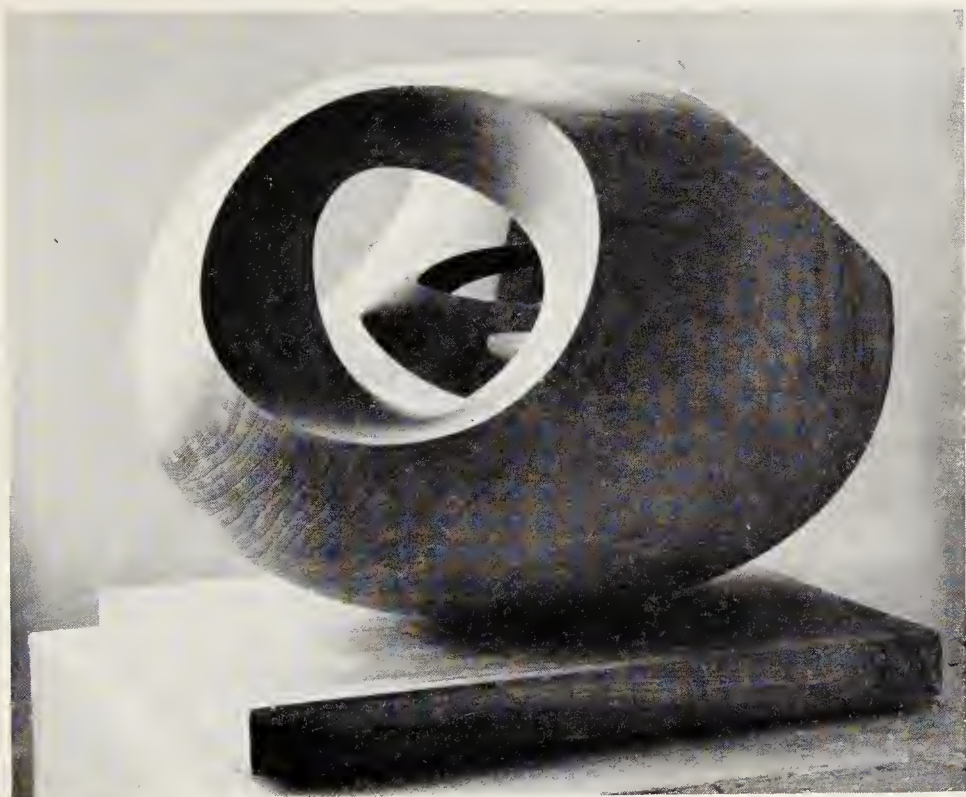


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The importance of light in relation to form will always interest me. In sculpture it seems to be an extension of the stereognostic sensibility and through it I feel it ought to be possible to induce those evocative responses which seem to be part of primeval life and which are a vital necessity to a full apprehension of space and volume.





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There is an inside and an outside to every form. When they are in special accord, as for instance a nut in its shell or a child in the womb, or in the structure of shells or crystals, or when one senses the architecture of bones in the human figure, then I am most drawn to the effect of light. Every shadow cast by the sun from an ever-varying angle reveals the harmony of the inside to outside. Light gives full play to our tactile perceptions though the experience of our eyes, and the vitality of forms is revealed by the interplay between space and volume.

Colour and form go hand in hand—brown fields and green hills cannot be divorced from the earth's shape—a square becomes a triangle, a triangle a circle, a circle an oval by the continuous curve of folding: and we return, always, to the essential human form and the human form in landscape.



The feminine point of view is a complementary one to the masculine. Perhaps in the visual arts many women have been intimidated by the false idea of competing with the masculine. There is no question of competition. The woman's approach presents a different emphasis.

* * *

I regard the present era of flight and projection into space and time as a tremendous expansion of our sensibilities, and space sculpture and kinetic forms are an expression of it; but in order to appreciate this fully I think that we must affirm some ancient stability—a stability which is inherent in land and rocks and trees, inherent in our capacity to stand and move and feel—in order to assess our true physiological responses to our poise in the landscape as well as to our position in space and time.

BARBARA HEPWORTH

Acknowledgment is made to Lund Humphries & Company Ltd. for permission to reprint excerpts from "Barbara Hepworth Carvings and Drawings," London 1952.



CATALOGUE

CARVINGS

- 1 TWO FORMS 1937 *Serravezza Marble* 26"
- 2 SINGLE FORM 1938 *Sandalwood* 45"
- 3 FORMS IN ECHELON 1939 *Tulip Wood* 40"
- 4 TWO FIGURES 1943 *Redwood* 20"
- 5 LARGE AND SMALL FORM 1945 *Cornish Elm* 24½"
- 6 ANTHOS 1945 *White Marble* 9½"
- 7 ELEGY II 1946 *Grey Elm* 20"
- 8 TIDES 1946 *Plane Wood* 18½"
- 9 SCULPTURE WITH COLOUR: EOS 1946 *Hopton Wood Stone* 23"
- 10 EIDOS 1947-48 *Portland Stone with Yellow* 20"
- 11 PENDOUR 1947-48 *Plane Wood* 28"
- 12 DYAD 1949 *Rosewood* 46½"
- 13 GROUP II: PEOPLE WAITING 1952 *Serravezza Marble* 20"
- 14 FIGURE: CHURINGA 1952 *Spanish Mahogany* 49"
- 15 HEAD 1952 *Mahogany and Strings* 17"
- 16 SINGLE FORM: ANTIPHON 1953 *Boxwood* 81"
- 17 HAND SCULPTURE: TURNING FORM 1953 *Sandalwood* 16"

DRAWINGS

- 18 DRAWING FOR WOOD SCULPTURE 1947 *Oil and Pencil* 16 x 19
- 19 TWO CURVED FORMS ON A GREY GROUND 1947 *Oil and Pencil* 12 x 16
- 20 FENESTRATION OF THE EAR 1948 *Oil and Pencil* 14½ x 10
- 21 PREPARATION 1949 *Oil and Pencil* 14½ x 20
- 22 FIVE STUDIES, BLUE, RED AND WHITE 1949 *Oil and Pencil* 21 x 25
- 23 GROUP, THREE VIEWS OF A YOUNG GIRL 1950 *Oil and Pencil* 18 x 14
- 24 STANDING FIGURES AND HEAD, CARYATID 1951 *Oil and Pencil* 27 x 9
- 25 TWO GROUPS OF RECUMBENT FIGURES 1951 *Oil and Pencil* 21½ x 15
- 26 GROUP OF FOUR WOMEN, SEASCAPE 1951 *Oil and Pencil* 15 x 18½"
- 27 GROUP OF THREE 1951 *Oil and Pencil* 20 x 16
- 28 TWO FIGURES, GREEK 1952 *Oil and Pencil* 23 x 16
- 29 WOMEN AND CHILDREN 1953 *Oil and Pencil* 11 x 13
- 30 MONOLITHS, PAVAN 1953 *Oil* 24 x 48
- 31 TWO FIGURES, HEROES 1954 *Oil* 72 x 48

All of these works, except number 6, were shown at the Whitechapel Retrospective Exhibition, London, 1954. Numbers 2, 11, 12, 18 and 21 were shown at the Venice Biennale, 1950.



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BARBARA HEPWORTH

BARBARA HEPWORTH was born on January 10, 1903 in Yorkshire. She was educated at the Wakefield Girls' High School, the Leeds School of Art and the Royal College of Art and studied for three years in Italy.

She has had many one man exhibitions in London. Retrospective exhibitions have been given her at Temple Newsam, Leeds, in 1943, in Halifax and Wakefield in 1944, at the Venice Biennale in 1950, in Wakefield City Art Gallery, York City Art Gallery and the Manchester City Art Gallery in 1951, and at the Whitechapel Gallery in London in 1954.

Examples of her work are in many private collections and in the following public collections: the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Tate Gallery, London; the Arts Council of Great Britain; the British Council; Leeds City Art Gallery; Manchester City Art Gallery; Wakefield City Art Gallery; Bristol City Art Gallery; Birmingham City Art Gallery; Hertfordshire County Council; St. Ives Borough Council; and the Kröller-Müller Museum in Amsterdam. In 1953, she was awarded one of the four second prizes in the International Sculpture Competition, "The Unknown Political Prisoner."

Two monographs have been published on her work, one with an introduction by William Gibson and one with an introduction by Sir Herbert Read. A film, "Figures in a Landscape," was made by Dudley Shaw Ashton in 1952-1953.

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